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Region 6
P.O. Box 3623, Portland, Oregon 97208

5230 Evaluation March 20, 1978

Blue River District Evaluation

Forest Supervisor, Willamette NF

Gregory M. Filip, Plant Pathologist, made a recent trip to the Blue River Ranger District and prepared the following report:

On March 14, 1978, I made a visit to the Blue River Ranger District, Willamette National Forest, with Ted Paulsen, Timber Management Planning (SO). The purposes of the visit were (1) to discuss plans for establishing plots in Armillaria root rot-infected plantations to be thinned this summer (see Report to the Blue River Ranger District, November 7, 1977); and (2) to examine plantations which are infected with hemlock dwarf mistletoe and are potential candidates for treatment with FIDM funding. Jim Bopes, Supervisory Forester, and Dennis Mottsinger, District Forest Technician, participated in the discussion and plantation examinations.

The objective of the evaluation concerning Armillaria root rot is to determine effects of precommercial thinning in 10- to 20-year-old Douglas-fir plantations infected with Armillaria root rot. These effects will be measured in terms of annual tree mortality and disease spread in thinned and unthinned plots in infected areas. The evaluation is expected to last for several years. Copies of a preliminary evaluation plan were supplied to all participants in the discussion. There were no objections or additions to the plan.

Two, possibly three, plantations were selected as potential candidates for establishing plots in root disease areas. Two plantations were examined in the field. Both are scheduled to be thinned this summer and contain several, scattered small pockets (2 to 3 trees) of Armillaria infection. Stocking is moderate to heavy in both plantations. If a sufficient number of plots cannot be established in both of these plantations, additional plots will be established in a third.

FIDM staff will establish the plots before contract crews begin thinning operations. Thinning will begin in plantations to be evaluated no earlier than July 15.

We visited two plantations which were infected with hemlock dwarf mistletoe. The first unit contained a mixture of sapling to pole-size Douglas-fir, cedar, and mistletoe-infected hemlock. The District wishes to thin the unit and inquired if FIDM funds are available to thin the hemlock according to dwarf mistletoe guidelines. Although of low priority, such funds are available and will cover only those costs beyond normal thinning costs. The District should submit a project proposal (5200-10), brief EAR, and benefit/cost evaluation for FIDM funds. Such funds are still available for use in FY 1978.

The second unit visited contained mistletoe-infected hemlock residuals as the overstory and hemlock, Douglas-fir, true fir, cedar, and some white pine as the understory. Some of the hemlock understory was over 5 feet tall and was already infected with mistletoe. However, several uninfected hemlock seedlings were observed. Some of the understory hemlock will serve as crop trees. The District wishes to remove all infected hemlock residuals (1) to prevent spread of mistletoe to uninfected hemlock seedlings and (2) to make productive again islands of infected hemlock residuals which are presently unmerchantable. FIDM funds are readily available for residual removal, and the District should submit a funding proposal to FIDM.

I concur with Dr. Filip's comments and recommendations. We are not certain if FIDM will have dwarf mistletoe control funds in FY 1979 so if the District can still obligate the mistletoe funds in FY 1978, they should request them.

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cc: Ted Paulsen, SO
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